



Steven L. Beshear  
Governor

Terry Holliday, Ph.D.  
Interim Commissioner of Education

**EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CABINET  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Capital Plaza Tower • 500 Mero Street • Frankfort, Kentucky 40601  
Phone: (502) 564-4770 • [www.education.ky.gov](http://www.education.ky.gov)

July 1, 2014

Leon Smith, Superintendent  
Russellville Independent Schools  
355 S. Summer Street  
Russellville, KY 42276

Dear Superintendent Smith:

As we make changes to address the needs of our students, we encounter the walls of the past. One goal of Kentucky Statewide Consolidated Monitoring (KSCM) is to help remove those walls wherever possible and create opportunities for the programs in our schools and districts to look at new ways to collaborate and collectively meet our ultimate goal: increasing student achievement while closing gaps and positioning our students to be college- and career-ready. The team members from your visit have engaged in this collaborative process in order to produce the attached Consolidated Monitoring Report.

During the 2013-14 school year, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) conducted monitoring in Russellville Independent school district. During this process, KDE program staff, utilizing program-specific monitoring tools, conducted on-site visits for the following programs:

- Title I, Part A
- Title II, Part A
- Alternative Programs
- Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)
- Career and Technical Education

Each program involved in the KSCM has an impact on our goal.

For example, Career and Technical Education (CTE) impacts student success and helps to close the achievement gap by working to make all students career ready. Through the use of a sequence of courses known as career pathways, CTE ensures that all students have equal opportunity to develop skills in demand by local industry.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) supports the vision of KDE by focusing the efforts of the state, districts, schools and teachers toward closing achievement gaps for students with disabilities and ensuring all students reach proficiency, graduate from high school, and successfully transition to a career or postsecondary education.

Title II, Part A focuses on improving teacher and principal quality to ensure that all students have equal access to highly qualified and effective teachers and leaders. Title I programs provide not only funding but guidance on working with disadvantaged students.

Simply by reducing duplication of effort, these programs and the others engaged in consolidated monitoring can work together to achieve more collaboratively than any of them could alone.

This report is the result of what can be best described as a “snapshot” of the district taken during our visit. It begins with identifying “Effective Practices”. These are practices that the individual programs felt were effective, and in some cases innovative. We strongly suggest that the practices identified be submitted to the KDE Best Practices website.

In addition, the monitoring team collectively discussed the findings and concerns of each program to identify what is categorized as “Common Concerns”. This represents a consolidation of findings reported by individual programs that were similar in nature and therefore presented a potential opportunity for collaboration between identified programs. Each of these concerns has been identified by at least two programs. Any suggested or required actions will be addressed by the specified programs. During this collaborative time, team members from all programs discuss suggestions for potential opportunities to work across programs, streamline implementation and increase success within each program.

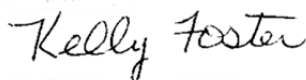
Each program has already provided an individual report as required by federal or state law. Any required actions are monitored by the programs through those individual reports. In order to help the collaborative work of the programs and provide districts with a way to document improvement efforts, we encourage you to utilize the Consolidated School and District Improvement Planning tools in ASSIST.

KDE is striving to provide examples of collaboration and continuous improvement. Our hope is that what we have begun becomes an example that can be replicated across the state.

Each district representative will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the consolidated monitoring process. In the meantime, if you have questions regarding specific program monitoring requirements, please contact the individual program contacts listed in this report. If you have questions concerning the consolidated monitoring process, please contact Claude W. Christian by e-mail at [claudio.christian@education.ky.gov](mailto:claudio.christian@education.ky.gov) or by phone at (502) 564-3791. Information regarding education programs within the state of Kentucky may also be found at [www.education.ky.gov](http://www.education.ky.gov).

Thank you for your work in improving Kentucky’s education programs to better provide for our children.

Sincerely,



Kelly Foster, Ed.D.  
Associate Commissioner  
Office of Next Generation Schools and Districts

# KDE Consolidated Monitoring Report

Russellville Independent School District

## KDE Consolidated Monitoring Report

District:	Russellville Independent School District		
Date(s) of Visit:	April 29, 2014 - May 01, 2014		
Team Leads:			
Title II: Jennifer Baker		Alternative Programs: Sherri Clusky	
IDEA: Robin Linton		Title I: David Millanti	
Career and Technical Education: Karla Tipton			

## Common Issue 1

Programs Addressed	Alternative Programs		Career and Technical Education		IDEA	
	Title I	X	Title II	X	Preschool	

**Common Issue****Recruitment and Retention of Highly Effective Staff**

District staff reported that recruitment and retention has shown to be a problem in the district. Staff stated that internship years are completed in Russellville Independent schools and then staff move on to higher paying positions at the Bowling Green Independent or Warren County school districts.

**Common Solution(s)/Reccomendation(s)**

As discussed during the on-site monitoring visit, the district may consider using Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A funds to attract and retain highly effective staff. This could include retention bonuses, tuition payments for additional coursework or another type of retention incentive allowable under the each program. Policies should be developed prior to implementing an initiative such as this to ensure effective and equitable distribution of these incentives based on set criteria. Criteria could include professional growth and effectiveness data. Be aware that all recruitment and retention activities funded through these sources would have to meet each program's requirements. Please contact David Millanti ([david.millanti@education.ky.gov](mailto:david.millanti@education.ky.gov)) if the district considers moving forward with this initiative through Title I, Part A funding. Please contact Jennifer Baker ([jennifer.baker@education.ky.gov](mailto:jennifer.baker@education.ky.gov)) if the district considers moving forward with this initiative through Title II, Part A funding.

## Final Overview

There was evidence of district and school collaboration directed toward moving student achievement forward, starting with the superintendent and including all staff. Particularly, internal structures allow district staff to work cross-functionally, providing targeted support and assistance to schools in meeting their needs.

Although not identified as a “common issue,” the district could benefit from increased, high-quality parental involvement activities across programs. Activities should be geared toward ensuring parents are true stakeholders in the educational process. The district is providing support for parental involvement through some monitored programs, but should consider how to collaboratively support these initiatives through other programs, potentially bringing together increased parent representation.

The district has in place systems to examine student-level data and should continually evaluate this data and look for ways to expand these systems in an effort to increase student achievement and close gaps.